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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6308
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7111
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 8360

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 001789

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -NIDA EMMONS
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies August 9 focused their news coverage on the meeting of Randall Schriver, former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and President Shui-bian; on a ruling by the U.S. immigration court to release fugitive Taiwan tycoon Wang You-theng on bail; on Vice Economics Minister Hou Ho-shong, former Kaohsiung mayor Frank Hsieh's deputy, who was detained for corruption; and on the results of Taiwan's university entrance examination.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, the pro-unification United Daily News said in an editorial that President Chen Shui-bian and the ruling DPP's manipulation of a proposed referendum on Taiwan's UN bid has turned advocacy for Taiwan independence into an anti-America confrontation. End summary

""Taiwan Independence" Turned into 'Anti-America[nism]""

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (8/9):

"... Even Frank Hsieh admits that the [DPP] proposed referendum on Taiwan's bid for [membership in] the United Nations under the name of 'Taiwan' is only a campaign game. Chen Shui-bian wanted to infuriate China. But thus far China has not yet made any major moves. Chen Shui-bian also wanted to provoke a counterattack from Ma Ying-jeou. But the KMT 'followed suit [with the DPP].' The Chinese Communists were not fooled. Ma Ying-jeou did not play along [with Chen]. All of a sudden, it has turned out that Chen Shui-bian and the DPP are directly and acutely confronting the U.S. authorities ...

"The Taiwan Strait is able to 'keep its status quo' mainly because the United States is holding the ladder. Although he is well aware of this fact, Chen Shui-bian deliberately has been making the ladder shake fiercely as he stands on it. This naturally angers the United States, which is holding the ladder from below. Without U.S. support, Taiwan's international security framework would be totally de-structured. Is it self-destruction for Chen Shui-bian and the DPP to fight against the United States? ...

"Particularly noteworthy is that the 'proposed U.N. bid referendum' issue has not only resulted in a dispute between Chen Shui-bian himself and U.S. authorities. It has also developed into the whole DPP against the U.S. cross-Strait policy and deprived Frank Hsieh of taking an independent position toward U.S.-Taiwan relations after the wording of the [DPP's] 'Normal Nation Resolution' was leaked out. This can be described as a major destruction of mutual confidence between the DPP and the U.S. authorities. These major injuries have harmed Taiwan, the DPP and, in fact, Taiwan independence. The reason is that, no matter what, 'Taiwan independence' has been turned into 'anti-America[nism].' This violates all political rationality. ..."